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Slain CIA Agent Receives L

By Eugene L. Meyer
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Richard S. Welch, the Central Intelligence Agency station chief whose slaying last week in Greece shocked the American intelligence community, came home yesterday in a flag-draped coffin to an unusual reception by government dignitaries and high CIA officials.

The body of the 46-year old CIA agent, accompanied by his 23-year old son, Marine 2d Lt. Patrick Timothy Welch, arrived in a C-141 Air Force transport at Andrews Air Force Base shortly after 7 a.m.

Those who gathered in the chill dawn to pay tribute to the slain agent included the highest official in the U.S. intelligence establishment, CIA director William E. Colby, and presidential counselor Philip W. Buchen Jr.

As the casket was carried from the plane by a Bolling Air Force Base honor guard, Welch's first

wife, Patricia, and their 17-year old daughter, Molly, placed their right hands over their hearts and the daughter burst into tears.

Also in the group of 30 lined up to mark Welch's arrival were Deputy CIA Director Vernon Walters, agency spokesman Angus Thurmer, David Phillips, president of the Retired Intelligence Officers Association, Arthur Hartmas, assistant secretary of state for European affairs, and his deputy, Bruce Langin.

"The President asked me to come out," said Buchen, the lone White House representative. Welch's death, he said is "all part of a general terrorist scheme, apparently. I don't know what can be done."

Welch was shot to death Dec. 23 outside his suburban Athens home after he had been identified in an English-language Greek newspaper as a CIA agent. He had previously served in U.S. embassies in Peru, Guatemala and Cyprus. An American magazine, "Counterspy," had earlier identified him as a CIA operative in Peru, where he served from 1972 until his transfer to Greece last May.

For the CIA, the airport ceremony represented rare acknowledgment that one of its agents had been killed. The agency will hold a memorial service for Welch later today at its headquarters in Langley. It will be a ceremony for agency employees only, including those in sensitive positions whose identities have to be protected.

No reporters or photographers will be admitted to the service, United Press International reported. It will be held in the white, dome-shaped auditorium just outside the main entrance to the headquarters building.

The reception yesterday for Welch began around 6 a.m. in darkness when television crews began setting up in a fenced-in "media area" on the Andrews airfield.

equipment told Air Force Lt. Lois Galan, a public information officer. "He's coming into the area early," she said, "but they'll keep him up until seven."

Inside the terminal, family and official greeters waited in a VIP lounge. On the field, there was a "ramp freeze," during which, Lt. Galan explained, "no trucks move, no people are allowed to move around. It's a security precaution," done routinely whenever the President lands at Andrews.

The big Air Force transport landed and stopped parallel to the terminal and was flooded by bright television lights. The black Cadillac hearse from Gawler's Funeral Home in Washington pulled up near the rear of the aircraft.

The mourning party lined up between the hearse and the plane. A four-man color guard joined them, then the honor guard, which disappeared up a ramp into the plane. It emerged carrying the casket, which it placed in the hearse before marching slowly away. The hearse drove off, and the mourners dispersed.

The entire ceremony lasted perhaps five minutes.

(Continued)

C.I.A. morale slumps after Athens killing

By RICHARD BEESTON in Washington

THE assassination of the C.I.A.'s station chief in Athens has dealt a new blow to the sagging morale of America's spy agency and brought instant notoriety to a group of Americans who first disclosed the murdered man's intelligence affiliations.

We emerged from obscurity overnight after we were attacked by the C.I.A. Director, William Colby," Mr. Tim Butz, a spokesman for the group, told me.

The group, called the Fifth Estate, had printed the name of the C.I.A.'s man in Athens, Richard Welch, in its publication, "Counterspy."

A former C.I.A. official, David Phillips, alleged that his subsequent murder was made inevitable by "the sordid practice of identifying American intelligence officers overseas."

Poky office

The Fifth Estate, which operates from a poky Washington office, responded that Mr. Welch's blood was on the hands of the C.I.A. since it was they who sent him to Athens. "The C.I.A. with its murders and tortures has now added the blood of one of its own," the Fifth Estate said.

Mr. Colby called this statement "a shocking attempt to use the death of a dedicated American as fuel for an irresponsible and paranoid attack on other Americans serving abroad."

In an interview yesterday Mr. Butz said the Fifth Estate grew out of the movement opposing the Vietnam war and the Watergate scandal, and was dedicated to exposing the C.I.A. and the "abuse of power" of the American government.

Mr. Butz said that Mr. Welch, who was listed as a diplomat in Athens, was operating only under "light cover" and that his only people who didn't know about him were the American public," he claimed.

Former agents

He said that among the members of the board of Fifth Estate were Philip Agee, a former C.I.A. officer now living in London who wrote a book exposing the names of agents, Anthony Russo, a former Rand Corporation employee, Victor Marchetti, another former C.I.A. official and author of a book on the C.I.A., and Vietnam war opponents David Dellinger and Mark Lane.

The group, he said, closely studied C.I.A. appointments and the appointment of Mr. Cord Meyer as C.I.A. station chief in London came as no surprise to them.

For the past few months Mr. Colby has been appealing desperately to Congressional committees investigating the agency not to disclose C.I.A. names, operations and sources, which could endanger the lives of agents operating abroad.

The assassination of Mr. Welch came just after a morale-building tour of Western Europe by Gen. Vernon Walters, the C.I.A. Deputy Director. He is keenly aware of the demoralisation among C.I.A. agents caused by attacks in Congress and Press reports about past C.I.A. misdeeds.

Arlington burial

President Ford yesterday waived restrictions to permit burial of Mr. Welch in Arlington National Cemetery normally reserved for members of the armed forces. In Vail, Colorado, where Mr. Ford is taking a skiing holiday, his press secretary Mr. Ron Nessen, reported Mr. Ford as saying that Mr. Welch "certainly died in the service of his country."

He said that Mr. Ford felt that recent articles identifying Welch as the C.I.A. Chief in Greece may have been "partly responsible for his murder."

The Greek Government yesterday banned any reference to the assassination to stop speculation that could harm Greek relations with America. Greek newspaper reports had suggested that the C.I.A. to stop investigations into its activities.